



**PENDING CLAIMS AFTER ENTRY OF AMENDMENT AND
REPLY TO OFFICE ACTION MAILED AUGUST 9, 2002**

1. (Amended) A zone arc fault detection system for detecting faults in a defined zone of an electrical circuit, such as an aircraft circuit, comprising:

a pair of substantially identical parallel insulated load conductors for each zone in which arcing is to be detected, thereby defining a detection zone comprising the length of said parallel conductors between end points where the two conductors are coupled together;

a current sensor operatively associated with each said pair of parallel load conductors, said current sensor and said conductors being respectively configured and arranged such that the current sensor produces a signal representative of the difference in the current flow in the two conductors.

2. The system of claim 1 wherein said current sensor comprises a current transformer having a high permeability core.

3. The system of claim 1 wherein said current sensor comprises a Hall effect sensor.

4. The system of claim 1 wherein said current sensor comprises a low magnetic permeability di/dt current sensor.

5. The system of claim 4 wherein said current sensor comprises an air core toroid.

6. The system of claim 5 wherein said current sensor comprises a flexible Rogowski coil formed into a figure 8 configuration.

7. The system of claim 4 wherein the current sensor produces a signal proportional to the difference between the time derivatives of the current in each conductor

and further including a circuit for integrating and filtering said sensor signal to produce a signal proportional to the current difference between said conductors.

8. The system of claim 1 wherein said current sensor comprises a resistive shunt constructed so as to produce a voltage difference proportional to the difference in current between said conductors.

9. (Amended) The system of claim 1 wherein said current sensor comprises a magnetic core and a coil wound around said core, said load conductors being operatively coupled with said coil such that magnetic fields of said conductors oppose each other.

10. The system of claim 9 and further including an armature attracted by said magnetic core in response to a current difference in said conductors.

11. The system of claim 1 wherein said current sensor comprises a differential current sensor which produces a predetermined motion in response to the current difference between the conductors.

12. The system of claim 11 wherein said differential current sensor comprises a bi-metal element.

13. The system of claim 1 and further including a fault detector circuit operatively coupled with said current sensor.

14. The system of claim 13 and further including a circuit breaker responsive to said fault detector circuit.

15. The system of claim 1 and further including a circuit breaker responsive to said differential current.

16. The system of claim 1 and further including a relay operatively coupled with said circuit breaker, said relay being responsive to said differential current for operating said circuit breaker.

17. (Amended) A method for detecting arcing faults in a defined zone of an electrical circuit, such as an aircraft circuit, comprising:

splitting a load conductor in each said defined zone into a pair of substantially identical parallel insulated conductors, thereby defining a detection zone comprising the length of said parallel conductors between end points where the two conductors are coupled together;

providing a current sensor operatively associated with each said pair of parallel conductors; and

configuring and arranging a current sensor and said conductors such that the current sensor produces a signal representative of the difference in the current flow of the two conductors.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein said current sensor comprises a current transformer having a high permeability core.

19. The method of claim 17 wherein said current sensor comprises a Hall effect sensor.

20. The method of claim 17 wherein said current sensor comprises a low magnetic permeability di/dt current sensor.

21. The method of claim 20 wherein said current sensor comprises an air core toroid.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein said current sensor comprises a flexible Rogowski coil formed into a figure 8 configuration.

23. The method of claim 20, including producing a signal proportional to the difference between the time derivatives between the current in each conductor and further including integrating and filtering said sensor signal to produce a signal proportional to the current difference between said conductors.

24. The method of claim 17 wherein configuring and arranging said current sensor comprises constructing a resistive shunt so as to produce a voltage difference proportional to the difference in current between said conductors.

2/0 25. (Amended) The method of claim 17 wherein configuring and arranging said current sensor comprises coupling said load conductors with a coil wound around a magnetic core.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein configuring and arranging said current further includes providing an armature attracted by said magnetic core in response to a current difference in said conductors.

27. The method of claim 17 wherein configuring and arranging said current sensor comprises providing a differential current sensor which produces a predetermined motion in response to the current difference between the conductors.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein said differential current sensor comprises a bi-metal element.

29. The method of claim 17 and further including coupling a fault detector circuit with said current sensor.

30. The method of claim 29 and further including providing a circuit breaker coupled for response to said fault detector circuit.

31. The method of claim 17 and further including providing a circuit breaker coupled for response to said differential current.

32. The method of claim 17 and further including operatively coupling a relay with said circuit breaker for responding to said differential current for operating said circuit breaker.